

Travel Guidelines

NEW TRAVEL RULES

On June 1, 2009, U.S. citizens returning home by land or sea from Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean region or Bermuda are required to have a passport, passport card, or other travel document approved by the Department of Homeland Security. Before these new rules went into effect, U.S. citizens only needed to show proof of identity and U.S. citizenship.

For more information Congresswoman Slaughter's work on WHTI and border issues, please see her [Border Policies](#) issue page here.

AIR TRAVEL

As of January 1, 2008, U.S. citizens returning from Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean region or Bermuda, by air, are required to present a passport to enter or re-enter the United States.

LAND AND SEA TRAVEL

Now, as of June 1, 2009, the full requirements of the "Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative" regarding land and sea travel are being implemented. U.S. citizens entering the U.S. by land or sea from Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean region or Bermuda will be required to present one of the following travel documents:

- U.S. Passport

This is an internationally recognized travel document that verifies a person's identity and nationality. It is accepted for travel by air, land and sea.

- U.S. Passport Card

This is a new, limited-use travel document that fits in your wallet and costs less than a U.S. Passport. It is only valid for travel by land and sea.

- Enhanced
Driver's License (EDL)

Several states are issuing this driver's license or identification document that denotes identity and citizenship. It is specifically designed for cross-border travel into the U.S. by land or sea.

- Trusted
Traveler Program Cards

NEXUS, SENTRI, or FAST enrollment cards can speed your entry into the U.S. and are issued only to pre-approved, low-risk travelers. The cards are valid for use at land or sea; the NEXUS card can be used at airports with a NEXUS kiosk.

Document Rules for Special Groups:

- Children

U.S. citizen children under the age of 16 will be able to present the original or copy of their birth certificate, or other proof of U.S. citizenship such as a naturalization card or citizenship card.

- Groups of Children

Groups of U.S. citizen children ages 16 through 18, when traveling with a school or religious group, social organization, or sports team, will be able to enter under adult supervision with originals or copies of their birth certificates or other proof of citizenship.

- "Closed Loop" Cruises

Travelers in cruises that depart from a U.S. port, sail only within the Western Hemisphere, and return to the same port do not have to comply with the new rules.

- Other Special Groups

Members of the military, members of the merchant marine, and Native Americans can also use special forms of identification.

ABOUT THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE TRAVEL INITIATIVE (WHTI)

The Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI) is a result of the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 to strengthen U.S. border security while facilitating entry for U.S. citizens and legitimate foreign visitors by providing standardized documentation that enables the Department of Homeland Security to quickly and reliably identify

a traveler. The initiative requires all travelers to present a passport or other document that denotes identity and citizenship when entering the United States. The countries covered by the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative are Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean region and Bermuda.

MORE INFORMATION

- [Apply for a passport>>](#)
- [GetYouHome.gov>>](#)
- [The US Department of State>>](#)